

Message Text

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

ACDA-07 EB-07 IO-13 /087 W
----- 082947

R 020959Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1505
USMISSION USBERLIN
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 14658

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PGOV WB US UR FR UK GE GW
SUBJECT: GENSCHER-FALIN CONVERSATION (AUGUST 26)

REFS: (A) BONN 14333; (B) USBER 1784; (C) USBER 1795

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE AUGUST 13 DIFFICULTIES ON THE
TRANSIT ROUTES TO BERLIN FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THE
CONVERSATION BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER AND
SOVIET AMBASSADOR FALIN ON AUGUST 26. FALIN'S
JUSTIFICATION OF THE GDR ACTION SEEMED, LIKE THE
SOVIET COMMENTARY OF LATE, TO ASSERT THAT THE
GUARANTEES OF UNIMPEDED ACCESS TO BERLIN WERE LINKED TO
MAINTENANCE OF "CALM" IN BERLIN. FALIN VOICED MORE OR
LESS STANDARD COMPLAINTS CONCERNING OTHER FRG
ACTIVITIES VIS-A-VIS BERLIN. END SUMMARY.

1. THE FRG BRIEFING TO THE BONN GROUP SUPPLEMENTED IN
A FEW DETAILS THE PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF FOREIGN
MINISTER GENSCHER'S AUGUST 26 MEETING WITH SOVIET
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AMBASSADOR FALIN REPORTED IN REF (A). HIGHLIGHTS OF
THE CONVERSATION AS GIVEN BY FRG REP (HENZE) TO THE

BONN GROUP ON AUGUST 31 FOLLOW.

BERLIN AND DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2. FALIN SAID THAT BERLIN'S PARTICIPATION IN A DIRECTLY-ELECTED EC PARLIAMENT WOULD REPRESENT A CHANGE FROM THE PRESENT SITUATION; UP UNTIL NOW, THERE HAD BEEN NO ELECTIONS AT ALL. IN ADDITION, THE FEDERAL LAW ON ELECTIONS WOULD BE EXTENDED TO BERLIN. (HENZE SAID IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHAT POINT FALIN WAS TRYING TO MAKE HERE.) GENSCHER RESPONDED THAT WHAT WAS PLANNED FOR BERLIN REPRESENTATION ACTUALLY REPRESENTED THE STATUS QUO MINUS; THERE WOULD BE LESS OF A FEDERAL TIE BECAUSE BERLINERS WOULD BE CHOSEN BY THE BERLIN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, RATHER THAN BY THE BUNDESTAG (AS AT PRESENT).

FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE COURT IN BERLIN

2. FALIN COMPLAINED THAT THE INDUCTION OF THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE COURT BY FRG JUSTICE MINISTER VOGEL HAD BEEN AN OFFICIAL ACT OF A FEDERAL MINISTER IN BERLIN. TO THIS, FALIN ADDED THAT THERE WAS AN EVEN GREATER PROBLEM IN THE BACKGROUND: THE STATUS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT ITSELF WAS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE QA. FALIN COMMENTED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD NOT PLAYED UP THAT FACT AS MUCH AS IT DESERVED BUT THAT THERE WERE ENOUGH PROBLEMS ALREADY. GENSCHER REPLIED THAT THE ACTUAL APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE COURT HAD BEEN MADE IN THE FRG AND NOT IN BERLIN.

SAARLAND CDU MEETING IN BERLIN.

4. FALIN ALSO BROUGHT UP WHAT HE TERMED A MEETING OF THE "SAARLAND GOVERNMENT" IN BERLIN TO DISCUSS AIR TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE SAAR AND BERLIN. HE STATED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD HAVE PREFERRED NOT TO REACT TO THIS INCIDENT BUT HAD BEEN FORCED TO DO SO: "OUR FRIENDS ARE CONCERNED BY THE PERMANENT VIOLATION OF THEIR CONFIDENTIAL
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INTERESTS."

TRANSIT RIGHTS AND THE QA.

5. ACCORDING TO HENZE, THE GDR TURNBACK OF BUS PASSENGERS FROM THE TRANSIT ROUTES ON AUGUST 13 CAME UP SEVERAL TIMES IN THE CONVERSATION. GENSCHER BEGAN BY STRESSING THE POINT THAT THE PURPOSE OF A TRIP TO BERLIN COULD NOT JUSTIFY TURNING BACK TRAVELERS. FALIN RESPONDED BY EXPRESSING WHAT HE

CALLED HIS PRIVATE VIEW. BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT

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ACDA-07 EB-07 IO-13 /087 W

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R 020959Z SEP 76

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OF THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY IN BERLIN IN 1974, ACCESS TO BERLIN HAD BEEN NORMAL. NOW, HOWEVER, THERE WERE EXCEPTIONS. IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE EXCEPTIONS COULD BECOME MORE FREQUENT THAN THE NORMAL STATE OF AFFAIRS.

6. HENZE COMMENTED THAT, HAVING MADE THIS STATEMENT, FALIN THEN TRIED TO PLAY DOWN THE ISSUE. HE STRESSED THAT WHAT BERLIN NEEDED WAS QUIET AND IT WAS MUCH BETTER TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS QUIETLY. HE THOUGHT GENSCHER SHOULD WORK TO CREATE A "REASONABLE ATMOSPHERE" IN BERLIN; IF HE DID SO HE WOULD FIND THE SOVIETS TO BE THE BEST OF FRIENDS.

7. WHEN GENSCHER REITERATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF

TRAVEL TO BERLIN DID NOT JUSTIFY A REFUSAL OF ACCESS,
FALIN STATED THAT THE TRANSIT AGREEMENTS HAD TO BE SEEN
IN CONNECTION WITH THE AIM OF THE QA, WHICH WAS TO
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CREATE A CALM ATMOSPHERE IN BERLIN. HE SAID
THAT THE GDR AND THE SOVIET UNION WERE NOT LOOKING
FOR PRETEXTS FOR REFUSING USE OF THE TRANSIT ROUTES
NOR WERE THEY INTERESTED IN TENSIONS. WHEN THEY
REACTED, IT WAS BECAUSE THEY HAD NO ALTERNATIVE. IT
WAS NECESSARY TO AVOID NEW ESCALATIONS.

8. FALIN THEN ADDED, "WE DO NOT NEED A NEW
AGREEMENT ON WEST BERLIN BECAUSE THE QA CONSTITUTES AN
OPTIMUM." HE NOTED THAT THE QA HAD WORKED WELL
OVER THE LAST FOUR OR FIVE YEARS AND THAT THAT SHOWED
THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE USSR AND THE GDR. AT THE
SAME TIME, HE ADDED THAT THE FRG SHOULD BE INTERESTED
NOT ONLY IN THE VIEWS OF THE WESTERN ALLIES BUT ALSO
IN THOSE OF THE SOVIET UNION. THE FRG MUST NOT FORGET
THAT "PART OF THE COMPETENCE" BELONGS TO THE SOVIET
UNION AND THE GDR; FOR THAT REASON, "IT IS NOT GOOD TO
DISREGARD THE VIEW OF THE FOURTH PARTY TO THE
AGREEMENT."
POSSIBLE BREZHNEV VISIT TO BONN

9. HENZE SAID THAT NO DATE FOR A VISIT WAS FIXED,
BUT IT WAS NOT EXCLUDED THAT BREZHNEV WOULD COME TO THE
FRG AFTER THE OCTOBER ELECTIONS BUT BEFORE THE END OF
THE YEAR.

COMMENT

10. AS WE COMMENTED IN REF (A), FALIN'S COMPLAINT AT
FRG FAILURE TO CONSULT THE SOVIETS ON MOVES AFFECTING
BERLIN WAS NOT NEW, NOR WAS THE SOVIET DEMAND FOR A
"FOURTH VOICE" IN DECISIONS ON BERLIN. IT WAS PERHAPS
TO BE EXPECTED THAT FALIN WOULD RUN DOWN THE CURRENT
LIST OF SOVIET COMPLAINTS CONCERNING FRG ACTIVITIES IN
BERLIN; THE ONES HE MENTIONED INVOLVED ISSUES ON WHICH
THE SOVIETS HAVE ALSO PROTESTED DIRECTLY TO THE THREE
ALLIES. IT IS OF INTEREST THAT FALIN'S COMPLAINTS
ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT AND THE SAARLAND CDU
MEETING PRECEDED BY SEVERAL HOURS THE DELIVERY OF THE
SOVIET PROTESTS ON THOSE TWO ISSUES TO THE ALLIES IN

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ACDA-07 EB-07 IO-13 /087 W
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R 020959Z SEP 76

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BERLIN (REF B).

11. THE MOST DISTURBING ASPECTS OF THE FALIN CONVERSATION WERE HIS VEILED THREATS THAT THERE MIGHT BE MORE INTERFERENCES WITH ACCESS TO BERLIN AND THAT THE SOVIET GUARANTEE OF UNIMPEDED ACCESS WOULD OBTAIN ONLY IF THERE WERE "QUIET" IN BERLIN. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BONN GROUP TENDED TO AGREE WITH A COMMENT BY HENZE THAT FALIN SEEMED TO BE TRYING TO JUSTIFY A DIRECT LINK BETWEEN THE PURPOSE OF A VISIT TO BERLIN AND THE GUARANTEE OF UNIMPEDED ACCESS. FALIN'S REMARKS WERE CONSISTENT WITH THE UNUSUAL SOVIET EMBASSY STATEMENT ISSUED IN EAST BERLIN TWO DAYS LATER (REF C).

12. USBER IS CORRECT IN REF (C) IN DESCRIBING THAT STATEMENT AS MILD IN TONE. THE BONN GROUP, HOWEVER, IN ITS AUGUST 31 DISCUSSION OF THAT STATEMENT IN

CONJUNCTION WITH FALIN'S REMARKS AND THE OTHER PUBLIC
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SOVIET COMMENTARY OF RECENT DAYS, EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN AT THE LONG-RANGE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOVIET POSITION. THE BONN GROUP READS THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE SOVIETS IN EAST BERLIN TO MEAN, IN EFFECT, THAT WE WERE WARNED ON AUGUST 12 THAT THE PLANNED DEMONSTRATIONS IN BERLIN WOULD BE A PROVOCATION AND THAT THE GDR WAS FULLY JUSTIFIED IN INTERFERING WITH ACCESS IN ORDER TO PREVENT THEM.

13. IN THIS CONTEXT, FALIN'S HINT THAT THERE MIGHT BE MORE FREQUENT USE OF THE ACCESS LEVER TO ASSURE "CALM" IN BERLIN, WHILE IT HAD BOTH CARROT AND STICK ELEMENTS, IS TROUBLING INDEED.

14. ONE OTHER ASPECT OF THE GENSCHER-FALIN CONVERSATION -- FALIN'S STATEMENT THAT THE SOVIETS WERE NOT SEEKING A NEW AGREEMENT ON BERLIN AND THAT THE QA REPRESENTED AN OPTIMUM -- WAS ALSO OF INTEREST. HE MAY HAVE MADE THE REMARK BECAUSE OF GROWING SPECULATION IN THE GERMAN PRESS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE PREPARING TO CALL FOR QUADRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS ON THE QA. WE DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT FALIN'S REMARKS CAN BE TAKEN AS A DEFINITIVE INDICATION OF SOVIET INTENTIONS ON THIS SCORE.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, BERLIN HIGHWAY ACCESS, BERLIN QUADRIpartite MATTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BONN14658
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760333-0406
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760999/aaaadgsq.tel
Line Count: 307
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 BONN 14333, 76 USBERLIN 1784, 76 USBERLIN 1795
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENSCHER-FALIN CONVERSATION (AUGUST 26)
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, US, UR, FR, UK, GC, GE, (GENSCHER, HANS-DIETRICH), (FALIN)
To: STATE USBERLIN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006